

Letters ITHACA JOURNAL, 23 MAY 67

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CIA, School Taxes

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Disastrous Effects

Editor, The Journal:

I am appalled at your endorsement of the C.I.A. program of clandestine support of student organizations, private foundations, and university programs. Apparently any lies and misrepresentations are justifiable as long as they serve the cold war policies of our government. In other words: the end justifies the means. But we all learn in school that that kind of justification, so often used by Communists, is unworthy of a democratic society.

I also question the practical value of these C.I.A. activities, even from a short run point of view. Many people like yourself take the mystical view that the fate of nations hangs upon whether a pro-Communist resolution is passed or blocked by the students who come together for a few days in an international congress. The world holds its breath while we wait to learn whether the good guys or the bad guys have scored the points in today's propaganda game. If the Russians want to

play this game, we feel we must be in there looking for points also. Do you have any evidence that these theatrical debates have effects upon the course of international relations?

While the short-run gains won by these C.I.A. policies are highly debateable, the long-run effects are clearly disastrous. What contributions U.S. students and professors can make to the improvement of U.S. relations with other countries do not come out of fleeting and sporadic attendance at international congresses. There is much more to be won through the broader and deeper relationships formed by students and professors who spend weeks, months, and years abroad, working, studying, and teaching. It is these long-term relationships which have been jeopardized by the pursuit of propaganda victories. In the wake of the C.I.A. revelations, anyone who goes to study or teach abroad carries the heavy burden of trying to prove he is not a C.I.A. agent.

This is not a hypothetical problem. We have already seen the effects close to home. For the last two summers Cornell students and faculty members have worked on development and study projects in Northeast Brazil, in collaboration with Brazilian students. Reports indicate that this has been an extraordinarily valuable learning experience for both U.S. and Brazilian students. Not only did they learn about the social, economic,

and political problems of one area of a developing country. Perhaps of even greater importance: the students learned to understand each other. And now the third Brazilian summer project has been cancelled, through the withdrawal of the Brazilian student participants. They reported that while they personally trusted the Cor-

nell students and faculty members involved in the program, the C.I.A. revelations had so poisoned the international atmosphere as to make further collaboration impossible at this time.

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